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Atkinson, Ben Hill, Grady, Thomas and Tift counties...

Off-System Roads and Bridges Benefit from \$8.4 Million in Projects

TIFTON – The state Department of Transportation has awarded projects totaling \$8.4 million to replace four off-system bridges and upgrade safety on local roads in southwest Georgia.

Georgia DOT awarded 55 contracts for statewide construction and maintenance projects totaling more than \$171.3 million. These projects were advertised for bids in May, bids were received in June and contracts were awarded July 1.

In southwest Georgia, old bridges will be replaced in Atkinson, Ben Hill, Grady and Tift counties and sign and striping upgrades will be made on 31 roads in Thomas and Tift counties. Off-system means the bridges and roads are not in the state highway system. GDOT helps local governments provide a safe and efficient transportation system through off-system projects, Southwest District Engineer Chad Hartley said.

Georgia DOT's first obligation with funds resulting from the Transportation Funding Act is to maintain and improve existing infrastructure. This month, bridge replacements represent a significant investment with \$72.6 million. The bridge replacements are design-build contracts. The design and construction were let in one contract, which means projects can be completed quicker than the traditional method of design, bid, build. Bridges were grouped geographically so the four bridges being replaced in southwest Georgia were bundled into one contract along with a bridge replacement in the adjacent southeast GDOT district.

"Design-build bridge bundles are an innovative way to replace Georgia's aging local bridges while maximizing the state's investment in a timely manner," said Georgia DOT Commissioner Russell R. McMurtry, P.E. "I am excited to make this investment in local communities. These bridges are critical for emergency vehicles, school buses and general freight movement."

Southwest Georgia bridges that will be replaced are:

- Cogdell Road at Red Bluff Creek, 8.5 miles southeast of Pearson in Atkinson County, \$1.7 million; bridge built in 1953.
- Perry House Road at Willacoochee Creek, 3.7 miles south of Fitzgerald in Ben Hill County, \$1.8 million; bridge built in 1962.
- Old Thomasville Road at Barnett's Creek at the Thomas County line in Grady County, \$3 million; bridge built in 1960.

- Lower Brookfield Road at New River, 5 miles southeast of Tifton in Tift County, \$1.5 million; bridge built in 1959.

Southern Concrete Construction Co. Inc. of Albany is the contractor. The bridges are to be completed 1,095 calendar days after the Department gives the OK to proceed with the project.

The other projects that will have an impact locally will enhance safety through upgraded signs and/or new center lines, edge lines and stop bars. When striping becomes worn it can be difficult for motorists to maintain their lane. To date, 255 fatalities have occurred statewide on local roads.

Thomas County roads that will receive upgrades are McGarrah Road, Dillon Road, Rogers Road, Cairo Road, McMillan Road, Egg and Butter Road, Coffee Road, Salem Road, Airline Road and Harts Mill Road.

Tift County roads included in the safety project are Omega-Eldorado Road, Zion Hope Road, Cromer Road, Whiddon Mill Road, South Park Avenue, Brookfield-Turner Church Road, Ferry Lake Road, Kell Road, Oakridge Church Road, WB Parks Road, South Central Avenue/Union Road, Mt. Zion Church Road, Salem Church Road, Tifton-Eldorado Road, Mt. Olive Church Road, Chula-Brookfield Road, Ty Ty-Sparks Road, Lower Ty Ty Road, Hunt Road, East Golden Road and Woodlawn Avenue.

The work will be done by Peek Pavement Marking LLC of Columbus at a cost of \$440,000 and the completion date is Oct. 31, 2017.

[View Project Letting Awards](#)

Every day Georgia DOT employees work on roadways in close proximity to travel lanes. Whether they're in maintenance, in construction or are HEROs, it's dangerous. Fifty-eight Georgia DOT personnel and many more motorists, passengers and contractors' workers have been killed in work zone crashes since 1973. When you drive in a work zone, obey the rules: Pay Attention - Slow Down - Watch for Workers. It can make the difference between life and death. Visit www.dot.ga.gov/DS/SafetyOperation/Workzone.

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